



Steven K. Young, Director

Department Launches Emergency Preparedness Web Site

DES MOINES, IOWA (October 10, 2006) – The Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) today launched its Emergency Preparedness web site, which provides long-term care facilities, hospitals, and other providers of medical service with guides and suggestions on how to deal with emergency situations. “The new web site contains a wealth of information on how facilities should deal with emergency situations,” DIA Director Steve Young said. “Fact sheets on everything from tornados to severe winter storms are available through the web site,” he added.

“The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has clearly identified as one of its major initiatives the development of emergency preparedness plans and communications processes for certified facilities and programs,” the Director added. “With the deployment of our Emergency Preparedness web site, the State of Iowa is well ahead of the national curve.”

The new informational web site can be accessed from the Department’s Internet web site (www.state.ia.us/government/dia) by clicking on the “Emergency Preparedness Web Site” navigation button. The site was developed in consultation with DIA’s stakeholders, including association representatives and government officials, and was previewed at the Department’s DIALOGUE session held August 23rd.

Several stakeholders offered suggestions regarding additional information that could be provided via the Internet, the Director explained, adding “Many of those suggestions have now been included in our web site. We will continue to update the web site materials on a routine basis so that it contains the latest information on emergency preparedness.”

Among the many interactive features of the Emergency Preparedness web site are links to the list of county emergency management coordinators and the Department’s key Health Facilities Division personnel. The site also contains suggested contact information forms that can be used by facilities during an emergency situation.

“The suggested forms provide space for essential contact information, including medical and pharmaceutical vendors, utility companies, and emergency transportation,” Director Young said. “We are encouraging all Iowa health care providers to assemble a transition book containing emergency contact information. This single source of information could be essential to the restoration of services during an emergency situation.”

Other elements of the Emergency Preparedness web site include a list of emergency action planning guides for long-term care facilities, action plans for Iowa hospitals, and a list of suggested provisions for nursing home plans compiled by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General.

“The information contained on the Department’s Emergency Preparedness web site will help facilities plan for disasters – before, during, and more importantly, during the recovery process,” Young concluded. “With advance planning, even the most severe situation can be addressed, and the effects on residents, patients, and clients can be minimized.”

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Emergency Preparedness Web Site

This release and other news items from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) may be found on the Department’s “Hot Notices” web page at
<http://www.state.ia.us/government/dia/page20.html>.